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L E T T E R

FROM CERTAIN

Gentlemen of the Council at BENGAL,

TO THE HONOURABLE

The SECRET COMMITTEE

For Affairs of the Honourable United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East-Indies.

CONTAINING

REASONS against the REVOLUTION in Favour of MEIR COSSIM ALY CHAN; which was brought about by Governor VANSITTART, soon after his Arrival in that Province.

L O N D O N :

Printed for T. BECKET and P. A. DE HONDT, in the Strand.
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SECRET

CONFIDENTIAL

Gentlemen of the Council of Bengal

TO THE HONORABLE

THE SECRET COMMITTEE

For Affairs of the Honorable United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East-Indies



Memorandum of the Resolution in Favor of Mr. Cassin Airy, which was presented by Mr. Victor Vaxant, and was adopted by the Council.

LONDON

Printed by T. B. and S. D. in the Strand

[For the Council]

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Letter is published to enable the Proprietors of India Stock to judge of the primary cause of the present commotions in Bengal, and of the true motives for deposing Jaffier Aly Cawn.

The friends of the Gentleman who accomplished that revolution have handed about an apology for so extraordinary a step: It cannot then be deemed improper to make public the reasons on the other side.

If names ought to have any weight in determining questions of this kind, there are two subjoined to the present Letter, those of Colonel Coote and Major Carnac, which have a Title to command the highest veneration from every lover of his country. Both of these Officers have performed actions which might vie with the most brilliant of antiquity.

Nevertheless, it is with equal justice acknowledged, that after the stroke was struck, some gentlemen approved of what had been done, who bear the fairest and most amiable characters.

But though the wisest and the best may sometimes differ in points of so interesting a nature, yet it is from facts and arguments alone that the impartial ought to decide.

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TO THE HONOURABLE
The SECRET COMMITTEE
For Affairs of the Honourable United Com-
pany of Merchants of England trading to
the East-Indies.

Copy.

HONOURABLE SIRS,

I. **I**T gives us the greatest concern to be obliged to address you, in the manner we are now under the necessity of doing; but as we have publicly declared our dissent from the late revolution in the kingdom of Bengal, and expressed our entire disapprobation of the measures pursued consequent thereto; it is our duty to acquaint you with our reasons for having differed in opinion from the gentlemen who were accessory to that revolution, lest ill-minded people should represent our opposition as a faction, instead of owing its rise, as it really does, to our strict regard to what we think conducive to the honour of our country, and the interests of our employers. Had the whole Board been consulted, we dare assert, this measure would have been rejected by the majority; and we humbly refer to you, whether the opinion of every member thereof ought not to have been taken by the president, before he ventured upon so bold a step as the subversion of a government.

B

2. You

2. You were informed, last year, of the surprising revolution in favour of Mir Mohammed Cossim Aly Chan, which would necessarily be represented in the most favourable light, by the gentlemen who promoted it. But whatever judgment you may have been led to entertain of the measure, from their account of it, we cannot but think you will judge as ill of it as we do, when you are truly informed of the circumstances with which it was attended, the manner in which it was executed, and the steps that have been since taken to support it: Of these we will give you as succinct an account as possible.

3. At a time, when there was not the least appearance of a rupture or disgust between us and the Nabob Jaffier Aly Chan; on the contrary, a friendship and harmony subsisted; Mir Cossim Chan, his son-in-law, came down to Calcutta, on some pretence or other, to visit Mr. Vansittart; and having staid a short time, he returned to Morshedabad. A few days after Mir Cossim's departure, Mr. Vansittart went up to Morshedabad, on the pretence of a visit to the Nabob. Colonel Caillaud, with a party of two hundred Europeans and some Seapoys, attended him; who, to remove the suspicion which such a force would have necessarily occasioned, it was pretended were going up to Patna, to reinforce the army there. When Mr. Vansittart arrived at Moradbang, the Nabob paid him two visits, at the last of which Mr. Vansittart, without any previous notice of his intentions, gave him the three letters, mentioned in consultation of the 10th of November, 1760; of which copies have been transmitted you. The abruptness with which these letters were presented him, one close upon the other, and the unexpected proposals contained in them, terrified the Nabob; and he was entirely at a loss how to act, but desired time to consider on what was to be done. Mr. Vansittart, seeing his perplexity, strongly insisted on his immediately

diately naming some person, from among his relations, to take charge of the Subaship; and very particularly recommended Cossim Aly Chan, who was sent for, and the Nabob was desired to stay till he came; but Cossim Aly Chan delayed so long, and the Nabob was in such anxiety of mind, and so desirous to be released from the visit, being greatly fatigued, that Mr. Vansittart was obliged, in order to save appearances, to suffer his departure to the palace, after having detained him much longer than his inclination. That night and the day following passed in concerting measures with Cossim Aly Chan, how to put in execution the plan before agreed on in Calcutta; *a treaty having been signed for this purpose, in September, 1760, while Cossim Aly Chan was down here.* In consequence of these deliberations, our troops clandestinely crossed the river, the next night, under Colonel Caillaud, and being joined by Cossim Aly Chan and his party, surrounded the Nabob's palace. A letter from Mr. Vansittart was sent in to the Nabob, demanding his immediate compliance with what had been proposed to him; to which the Nabob returned for answer, "That such usage was what he never expected from the English; that whilst a force was at his gates, he would enter into no terms; and that it was his desire our troops might be returned to Moradbaug." A message was then sent, informing the Nabob, that if he did not directly comply, they should be obliged to storm the palace. Astonished and terrified by this menace, he opened the gates, exclaiming, "That he was betrayed; that the English were guilty of perjury and breach of faith; that he perceived their designs against his government; that he had friends enough to hazard at least one battle in his defence; but although no oaths were sacred enough to bind the English, yet as he had sworn to be their faithful friend, he would never swerve from his engagement, and rather suffer death than draw his sword against them." So suspicious was he of being

sold, that, " He desired to know what sum of money Cossim Aly Chan was to give for the Subaship, and he would give half as much more to be continued : he hoped, however, if they intended to dethrone him, they would not leave him to the mercy of his son-in-law, from whom he feared the worst, but rather wished they would carry him from the city, and give him a place of safety in Calcutta." This last request of the Nabob's, the effect of his fear and despair, was immediately laid hold of, and construed in the light of a voluntary resignation. Accordingly, our troops took possession of the palace ; Mir Cossim Chan was raised to the Musnud ; and the old Nabob was hurried into a boat, with a few of his women and necessaries, and sent away to Calcutta, in a manner wholly unworthy of the high rank he had so lately held ; as is also the scanty subsistence allowed him here by his successor.

4. Thus was Jaffier Ali Chan deposed, in breach of a treaty founded upon the most solemn oaths, and in violation of the national faith. A prince of whose friendship and attachment you have had many signal proofs ; in whose cause our arms have, with much honour, been employed ; and by a firm adherence to whom, the English had acquired, throughout the whole country, so universal a character of fidelity and constancy, that the most perfect confidence was placed by the natives in them.

5. The advantages to be reaped by the Company, from the revolution, were, the grant of the Zamindarries of Burduan, Midnapoor, and Chittagong ; the payment of the balance due from Nabob Jaffier Aly Chan ; with a present of five laack of rupees from Cossim Aly Chan, towards defraying the expences of the war against the French, on the coast of Coromandel. Of these, Mr. Vansittart, on his return to Calcutta, acquainted the Board ; and, at the same time, in
justifi-

justification of his proceedings, laid before them a memorial ; copies of which were transmitted to you, by the ships of the last season.

6. This memorial is introduced with a list of crimes laid to Jaffier Aly Chan's charge ; which, to those unacquainted with the Eastern governments, will appear deserving of the highest resentment from a civilized nation. Yet such is the state of politics in every Asiatic court, that, through the apprehensions of the sovereign, and the intrigues and artifices of the great men about him, instances of cruelty and oppression are but too frequent ; and even the most beloved among them are too much to be taxed with committing, or at least conniving at, acts of violence ; but it should be considered, that many of these are done by persons in power, without their knowledge ; and that, as there are no regular punishments for criminals of station, and who may be so powerful that it would be dangerous proceeding openly against them, recourse is often had to the dagger or poison to punish the guilty. This was the case in most of the instances alledged against Jaffier Aly Chan ; none of which shew greater proofs of cruelty, than that which Cossim Aly Chan discovered when, being in possession of the palace, he was desirous of making the first act of his power the assassination of Jaffier Aly Chan therein, and was very much displeased, when he found we intended to give him protection at Calcutta. Since his accession to the Subadorie, we could produce to you numberless instances of his extortions and cruelties, but that it would run us into an exorbitant length ; and he seems to have made the more immediate objects of his ill usage, those who have been the most avowed friends of the English. We shall only particularise Ramnarain, whom he dispossessed of the Naibship of Patna, in which it was always thought sound policy in us to support him, on account of his approved faith ; and he now keeps him in irons, till he has been fleeced to the utmost,

utmost, when there is no doubt he will be dispatched. Most, if not all those who espoused the English interest, have been laid under the heaviest contributions, and many have died under the force of torture, to exact money from them; others have been either basely murdered, or (which is a common practice among Gentoos) unable to sur vive the loss of honour, have made away with themselves.

7. It is insinuated in the memorial, that the Nabob's avarice and cruelty had made him the detestation of all good men, and that he was in the hands of bad ministers, under whose mal-administration the country was greatly oppressed: as an instance whereof, the scarcity of grain in the city is produced. To these ministers are ascribed the great difficulties the Nabob laboured under, for want of money to answer the expences of the government, and to pay the army, rendered mutinous for want of their arrears; besides which intestine danger, the provinces were threatened with an invasion by the Shahzadah with a powerful army, and several of the Rajahs and Zamyindars, were on the point of revolting, to encounter all which there was nothing but a disaffected army. Mr. Vanfittart appeals to every by-stander for the truth of these facts, and of the imminent peril to which the country was exposed; he declares his intentions were only to remove the bad ministers, for which purpose he carried up with him the party of Europeans and Seapoys. He proceeds to set forth the manner in which the old Nabob was removed from the government, and Cossim Aly Chan raised. He says, People in general were pleased with the revolution; and makes a merit of its being effected without the least disturbance in the city, or a drop of blood spilt. He concludes with representing the anxiety the Nabob expressed to get from the city, through fear of Cossim Aly Chan; and observes, that he appeared pretty easy and reconciled to the loss of his power, which he owned to be rather a burden than a pleasure,

sure, and too much for his abilities to manage since the death of his son; and that the enjoyment of the rest of his days in security, under the English protection, seemed to be the chief object of his wishes.

8. It is very natural for any person who takes an uncommon step, to endeavour to vindicate himself by the most specious arguments, and the most plausible reasoning he can devise; and nothing less could be expected from Mr. Vansittart, after having brought about so unprecedented a revolution. He has told his story with all the aggravations the nature of it would admit: notwithstanding which, we do not imagine the reasons he has given in support of so violent a measure will prove satisfactory to the world. He takes great pains to blacken Mir Jaffier's character, in order to prejudice men's minds against him; and lays great stress upon the scarcity of grain in the city; but we apprehend Mr. Vansittart does not judge so harshly from that circumstance, after what he himself experienced last year; for notwithstanding all the care, we are not to doubt, he has taken, grain was never known so scarce in Calcutta before, inasmuch that numbers daily perished.

9. Want of money was the great difficulty the Nabob laboured under; but this did not proceed from any fault of his, but from the distracted state in which the country had been ever since Colonel Clive's departure; so that a very small part of the revenues came into his treasury. The Burdwan and Nuddea countries were assigned over to the Company for the payment of the Nabob's debt. Midnapoor, the frontier to the south-west, was overrun by the Marattas; Beerboon, and other Zamindaries, with the province of Purrea, under Kuddum Hussein Chan, were affected towards the Shahzadah, who had under contribution the whole province of Bahar,

Bahar, except the city of Patna and a small district around it. Chittagong, the eastern barrier, did little more than defend itself against the incursions of the Muggs, inhabitants of Aracan, who used every year to come into Bengal for plunder. There remained only the Dacca province, the districts round Morshedabad, the Radshy and Dinagepoor countries, to supply the immense expence of the war. And here lay the Nabob's distress, that with one fourth part, if so much, of the accustomed revenues, he was obliged to maintain an army greater than any Nabob did before him: and the English army was not the least considerable part of the burthen; for trusting most to them, he paid them first; which preference was the cause of discontent to the country troops. And tho' the force we had in the field, against an enemy whom Colonel Clive had, but a very short time before, drove out of the country, far exceeded those the Colonel had with him, yet no material advantage was gained over them, but the country was overrun and ravaged by them, and by frequent marches and counter-marches, our own armies became as destructive as those of the invaders. No wonder then at the perilous condition to which Mir Jaffier was reduced; to extricate him from which, it behoved us to exert our utmost abilities; instead whereof, he was treated with the greatest indignity by us, and basely turned out of his government.

10. To remove bad Counsellors from a Prince is certainly meritorious; but it does not seem to us that any thing was ever designed against the Nabob's ministers; on the contrary, that the sole intent was to displace the Nabob himself, is pretty evident, by the treaty before-mentioned, made in Calcutta. Had there been the least attempt to convince him in a friendly manner of any errors in his administration, or of the necessity of dismissing from his presence those who ill-adviced him, it is not to be doubted that he would have hearkned

hearkned to reason. That he was not obstinate against good advice, may be concluded from the extraordinary influence which Colonel Clive had over him; in proof whereof, we need only call to mind how violently he was incensed against Rajah Ram Narrain, and Roy Dulub; yet the Colonel, by gentle methods, without having recourse to any other force than that of persuasion, perfectly reconciled him to the former, and obtained his permission for the latter to reside at Calcutta, and bring thither with him his family and effects.

11. The people in general, very far from being pleased with the revolution, (as alleged in the memorial) were extremely dissatisfied thereat. Had Cossim Aly Chan been before in esteem among them, or possessed any share of influence or power, they might perhaps have overlooked the circumstance of his rise, and a series of popular actions might in time have reconciled them to the usurpation. But he was despised and disliked before he came to the Musnud, and his behaviour since has been so oppressive and tyrannical, that it could not fail confirming the public hatred of him.

12. The little disturbance at Morshedabad upon the occasion, proceeded from the apprehensions all degrees of people were under from so large a force being brought into the city in the dead of night; and Mir Jaffier, noways suspicious of the faith of the English, had taken no precautions for his own security. Such is the superiority of our arms, and so great the dread of our forces in this country, that had we gone openly to work, we should have met with little or no difficulty; which renders our having proceeded by stealth and treachery the more inexcusable: and we are truly sorry to have occasion to observe, that the means by which this measure was brought about have thrown an indelible stain upon our national character,

character, and injured us as much in the opinion of the natives, as it has of all the European colonies in this part of the world.

13. It is asserted in the memorial, that Mir Jaffier was easy under the loss of his power, which he is said to have owned to have been rather a burthen to him: but it is evident, on the contrary, from his declarations since, and his letters to the company and Colonel Clive, that he was very unwilling to part with his government; and that he greatly regrets the deprivation of it. He was necessitated, indeed, to submit; and in hopes of being redressed some time or other by the Company, judging that such a step could never be approved at home, he very wisely chose, rather than trust himself with his son-in-law, to wait patiently for that redress in safety at Calcutta. So far he might appear resigned to his fate; yet this can never be construed as an abdication of his government, though it has been industriously endeavoured to make the world look upon it in that light.

14. We have now, Honourable Sirs, laid before you a true account of the revolution. The projectors perhaps thought the advantages it was to bring the Company would be a sufficient atonement for the measure, and ensure them the approbation of their masters. It is true the Company have a considerable addition of territory, and do now receive a large yearly revenue; but as great, if not greater advantages might have been procured by more honorable means: and the present tranquil state of the country, which secures to the Company as well as the Nabob the full enjoyment of their revenues, is not the effect of Mir Cossim Chan's Nabobship, but of an event which would equally have happened, had Jaffier Aly Chan been continued on the Musnud, as can be easily made to appear.

15. Soon

15. Soon after Cossim Aly Chan was fixed in the Nabobship, the Company were nominally invested with the Zamyndaries of Burdwan, Midnapoor and Chittagong: and only nominally; for our first demands upon the two former of these, for the payment of the revenues, were refused.

16. So bad an impression of us did the revolution create in the minds of the country people, that the Burdwan Rajah, who, in Jaffier Aly Chan's time, had often expressed his earnest desire that the Company might continue to collect the revenues of his district, as they had all along done, on account of the Tunckaws, and that they would procure the Zamyndarie for themselves from the Nabob; yet after the breach of our faith to the old Nabob, concluding no reliance was to be placed in our engagements, he immediately flew off from his former declarations, and instead of acquiescing under our government, he began to act in open rebellion; he stopped our trade, raised a large force, invited the Marattas into his country, withheld the payment of his revenues, and acting in conjunction with the Beerboon Rajah, he espoused the cause of the Shahzadah, with whom he entered into correspondence.

17. Several other Zamyndars who had remained quiet whilst Jaffier Aly Chan was Nabob, now finding the government overset, thought themselves at liberty to withdraw their allegiance, and would not acknowledge Mir Cassim, but joined the Shahzadah; whose party, by these frequent defections, was strengthened with supplies both of troops and money, and whose followers were greatly encouraged by his having been able to maintain his ground, and continue in our dominions the whole preceding campaign, in defiance of the English army.

18. The Nabob's troops were rendered quite mutinous by the news of the revolution. They declared they knew nothing of Cāsim Aly Chan, and that now they had lost their old master; they were without hopes of being paid any part of the immense arrears due to them; and nothing less than the extraordinary assiduity and influence of Mr. Amyatt, who was then Chief at Patna, could have prevented them from proceeding to extremities.

19. In this situation were things when Col. Caillaud left Patna, and Major Carnac received the command of the army from him. The Major saw it was impossible for the country to support itself against such a combination of difficulties, and that if a decisive blow was not soon struck, the Shah could not fail to have immediate possession of all. He therefore determined to bring the Prince to an action as speedily as possible; and after securing Patna by a garrison, to prevent its being plundered by that rabble of troops whose duty it was to defend it, he pushed on with the English army as fast as he could towards the Prince. He came up with him three days march from the city, the consequence of which brought on an action wherein he gained a complete victory*, and reduced the Shah in a few days after to the necessity of putting himself under the protection of the English. The Major's success, as it put an end to the hopes of all the rebellious Rajahs and Zamyndars, so it at once quelled all commotions, and established the so long wished for tranquillity in the country; and the different provinces were now brought into order, and rendered in a condition to pay their respective revenues; the Nabob's treasury was enriched, and he was enabled to discharge the

* This battle was the most remarkable of any which has lately been fought in India, Plassy not excepted; and may even be compared to that of Alexander against Porus.

arrears of his army, and to advance the money he had engaged to pay the company.

20. Whatever merit there is then in the present tranquillity, is to be ascribed to our success against the Prince, which, by putting an end to the war in the country, reduced it to a state of perfect obedience. And as all the old Nabob's difficulties proceeded from his dominions being the seat of war, and the default of his revenues on that account, there is not the least doubt, had our arms met with the same success during his government, but that he would have extricated himself with equal ease.

21. After what has been set forth, we believe few will imagine that Mir Jaffier was deposed by reason either of a want of ability to rule, or of his bad principles. We would willingly indeed suppose, that it proceeded rather from the want of a true knowledge of the country policy, and from an error of judgment, than from lucrative views, had not Mr. Vanfittart, and others of the projectors, made no secret that there was a present promised them by Cassim Aly Chan of twenty lack: 'tis true, they make a merit that this was not to be delivered till the Company's debt was paid, and his army satisfied. We have to observe on this occasion, that several of us have had offers from the Nabob of very considerable sums to join in his measures, which we have constantly made publick, as well as refused; and if we, who have always opposed those measures, have been thus tried with pecuniary temptations, what may be concluded of those Gentlemen who have supported the Nabob on every occasion?

22. If the Nabob has purchased the power he is invested with, it is to be expected he will of course make the most of it, by extorting money from his subjects, and oppressing every province as much

as he can; and as the fate of Jaffier Aly Chan must have convinced him how little we regard the most sacred engagements, he will of necessity endeavor to establish himself on a foundation less precarious than the friendship of the English. That he already begins to do so, is evident from his still increasing the number of his troops (notwithstanding the present tranquillity) and to render them the more formidable, he is arming and disciplining as many Seapoys as he can procure, in the European manner: and to secure himself as much as possible from us, esteeming his capital Morshedabad (the scene of his predecessor's fall) too near our settlements, he is about erecting a large fort at Rajahmaul, which he proposes to make his place of residence, where he hopes to be out of our reach.

23. When any Member of the Board suggests, that the Nabob's behaviour argues a suspicion of us, for that if he really confided in, and sincerely regarded us, he would not put himself to the unnecessary expence of keeping so large an army in pay, nor treat so ill those who are avowedly our friends; it is replied, "The Nabob is master of his country; and being independent of us, is at liberty to rule and act as he pleases." But surely Cassim Aly Chan cannot be more so than his predecessor was: and if it be true that the Nabob of Bengal is independent of the English, and master of his own actions, how can the gentlemen justify their proceedings against Mir Jaffir, whom they called to so severe an account for the administration of his own government, as to depose him, tho' he had not been guilty of any offence to our nation, nor ever deviated from his treaty?

24. Instead of checking the overgrowing power of the present Nabob, it is daily promoted; and he has even the absolute command of our army at Patna, the Chief there having directions to let him

him have what number of our troops he pleases to demand, without being allowed to judge of the nature of the service for which they are demanded. This you will observe, Honourable Sirs, in the instructions given to Mr. Ellis, dated the 22d September last, and in the consultation of the same day, where some of our opinions on that procedure are entered. We cannot help expressing how much we fear that an ill use will be made by him of this power over our forces, and that they will sooner or later be employed for such purposes as will render us more odious to the whole country, bring greater discredit upon our arms, and reflect farther dishonor upon our nation.

25. Notwithstanding this zealous attachment to Cassim Aly Chan, there can be no reason to hope he will act the part of a faithful ally towards us. What dependance can be had on a person who so readily entered into the scheme of deposing not only his lawful master, but his patron under whose immediate care he was brought up? who shewed so much disloyalty to his natural Sovereign*, the King of Indostan, as to evade even acknowledging him, till he was in a manner obliged to it by our repeated desires? and who betrays a continual distrust of those who have appeared any way attached to us?

26. The Nabob's undutiful behaviour to the King, proceeded in great measure from his jealousy of the regard we professed for him, and his fears that we should reduce his authority, by subjecting the Subaship to its primitive dependency on the Mogul, and obliging him to pay the royal revenues. He therefore set every engine to work to create a rupture between us; he endeavoured to make the

* Formerly the Shazadah who was defeated by Major Carnac, in that famous battle near Patna, as related above, and who, on the death of his father, became King of Indostan, and consequently Sovereign of Bengal, which is one of the provinces of his empire.

King uneasy, and to instill notions into him of his being in danger from us, in order to get him out of the country. He excited a mutiny in the King's camp, which, had it not been for the timely assistance sent by Major Carnac, might have proved fatal to his Majesty. He repeatedly urged Mr. Vansittart to dismiss him; and forged letters to himself and the President, as from the King, complaining of being forcibly detained by the Major, and expressing his anxiety by not being allowed to leave the country. That these letters were forged, his Majesty hath solemnly declared, by an attestation under his own hand; and testified his abhorrence of so infamous a proceeding. The Nabob, however, at last so far prevailed, by corruption and intriguing with some of the courtiers, as to bring about what he had so much at heart, the King's being sent away without receiving any assistance from us, or being paid any part of the revenues of this Subaship. This rebellious behaviour of the Nabob justly incensed the King, who declared that he would not suffer him to continue in his Subaship, whenever he had power sufficient to prevent it.

27. His Majesty, before his departure, gave the most unquestionable proof of his hatred to Cossim Aly Chan, and of his esteem for the English, by the voluntary offer he made them of the Dewanny of Bengal. This post is the collection of the revenues of all the provinces subject to the Nabob, which are to be accounted for with the court of Delhy. It differs from the Subadaree; the latter being the command of the troops, and the charge of the jurisdiction in the provinces, the expences whereof are paid out of the revenues by the Dewan. It was formerly a separate office, but the Nabobs of Bengal, taking advantage of the late commotions in the empire, have assumed it to themselves. From the nature of the office, it is evident that the king, distrusting the Nabob, intended that we should

should be a check upon him, and be answerable for the revenues, no account of which he could get from Cossim Aly Chan, who detained them for his own use. This appointment would have brought the Company about fifteen laacks yearly, exclusive of the lands of Burdwan, Midnapoor, and Chittagong, which his Majesty also offered to confirm to them; and to establish their interest and influence, not only in these provinces, but as far as the city of Delhy itself, to which place our commerce might then, with the utmost safety, have been extended.

28. It is hard to conceive why so honorable and advantageous an offer should be rejected; it is alledged it would be the source of continual disputes between us and the Nabob, and occasion too great a diminution of his power; but surely this consideration, admitting it to be true, ought not to stand in competition with the honor and interests of the Company, which would be greatly promoted by such an appointment; what renders this refusal the more extraordinary is, that it is well known application was made to the King, soon after Mr. Vansittart's arrival, in Jaffier Aly Chan's time, for the sunads or grants of the province of Bengal, which were actually drawn out to be sent to us; but the revolution, in favour of Cossim Aly Chan, taking place in the interim, an entire stop was put to the Negotiation.

29. The Nabob was so inveterate against all those natives who were known to be in our interest, that he used his utmost endeavours to prevail on Colonel Coote and Major Carnac, to consent to his proceeding to the most unjustifiable severities against them, particularly against Rajah Ramnarain, having offered the Colonel five Laack of Rupees, provided he would concur in the destruction of that unhappy man, who has since been given up to him by the board. The

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Colonel's

Colonel's refusal of this money, we are well convinced, was the motive of his (the Nabob's) unjust suspicion and resentment against him, which appears not only by the Colonel's Letters on the face of the proceedings of the board, but also by Cossim Aly Chan's own declaration to him, that he could not be his friend unless he received his present.

30. The same spirit of resentment, which actuated the Nabob against Colonel Coote, was equally strong against Major Carnac, whom he also endeavoured to buy over to serve his ends but in vain. The Nabob saw, with a jealous eye, the many distinguishing marks of favor the King conferred on him, and would fain have made a breach between them, which not being able to effect, he wrote several letters of complaint against him to the President, who from prejudice was too much inclined to believe them, and sought all opportunities of blaming his conduct at the board, and of putting the worst construction upon all his endeavours, for the publick service of which many instances could be produced.

31. A flagrant injustice was done Major Carnac in calling him away from Patna, when the detachment still left there, was large enough to render the command adequate to his rank, and where he might have been of service: whereas his presence was unnecessary at Calcutta, as the Colonel was going down.

32. A very signal insult offered by Cossim Aly Chan to the English nation, was the intercepting, by his order, a letter which Major Carnac, when commanding the army, had wrote to the King, which the Nabob opened and sent to the President. This letter, with others from the Nabob, was minuted in consultation of the 5th of August, and it was insinuated to contain proof of a plot, con-

certed

certed between the Colonel, Major, Ramnarain and Shitabray, to create a fresh revolution. Much pains were taken to find out mysterious meanings in the letter, and hints were thrown out to prepossess the board, that such a combination was actually on foot; however, after the closest scrutiny into the letter, and the strictest examination of Shitabray, who was called down from Patna for that purpose, the board gave it unanimously as their opinion, that there were not the least grounds to suppose any such combination, the ridicule whereof was so conspicuous, that we do not imagine even those who so seriously promoted the enquiry could ever have believed it.

33. The material part of this letter related to an application, which the Major (by Colonel Coote's directions) made to the King, to be put in possession of some fort in Shuja Dowlah's country upon the Ganges; which, had our troops attended his Majesty, as we must have marched through Shuja Dowla's territories, would have been absolutely necessary for a place of arms, and to keep up our communication. The stopping such a letter, or indeed any one from a person in so public a character as the Major then was, might be of the most fatal consequence, was also a public affront, and one that never was before offered by any Nabob: yet no satisfaction has ever been obtained from him, although wrote to publicly on that head.

34. You will now, Hon^{ble} Sirs, be able to compare the present with the preceding government. So momentous a step as subverting the former one, we conceive, ought not to have been undertaken till after the most mature deliberation, and from a thorough knowledge of the country, its connections and interests. But this was far from being the case. Mr. Vansittart had only been three months in

Bengal, and in so short a space of time can hardly be supposed to have acquired so perfect a knowledge of matters as to be able to determine, that it was absolutely necessary to annul a treaty which had been ratified, in the most solemn manner, by Admiral Watson, and Colonel Clive, together with a regularly-authorized select Committee, guarantied by the credit of the Company, and the honour of the nation.

35. The gentlemen, who were the promoters of this revolution, have coincided remarkably in each others opinion during the last year's consultations : in return, the President has not failed to shew them partiality, of which we will give you a remarkable instance : notwithstanding, in your letter to this presidency, dated 21 Jan. 1761, you were pleased, in the most positive terms, to order the dismissal of Messieurs Sumner, Playdell and Mac Guire ; yet, on the 10th of August, when, in consequence of Mr. Mac Guire's dismissal, Mr. Ellis was appointed chief at Patna, Mr. Vansittart proposed in Council, that Mr. Mac Guire should remain in the chief-ship till Mr. Ellis's arrival, which could not be effected in less than two months. The question was absolutely put to the Board, but carried in the negative ; the other gentlemen not chusing to be guilty of so glaring a deviation from their masters' orders : and at Mr. Vansittart's desire, this proposal of his own was not entered on the face of that consultation. Here it will be necessary also to observe, that Mr. Holwell, after the Hon^{ble} Company had shewn him so plain a mark of their displeasure, as to remove him from the Chair to seventh in council, at first wavered, whether to continue in the service or not, till (as he declared) he had a private conference with Mr. Vansittart ; after which he remained in both council and select committee till the very day on which Mr. Vansittart took leave.

leave of the Board, to proceed to Morshedabad, in order to execute the plan which had been formed ; and then Mr. Holwell resigned.

36. The Armenian ministers of the revolution, Cojah Petruce and Kojah Gregory, are in the highest degree of favour with the Nabob and his adherents ; the former resides in Calcutta, retained by Cossim Aly Chan, a known spy upon every transaction of the English, of which he never fails to give his master the most regular intelligence, as was too apparent to both Colonel Coote and Major Carnac, when they were at Patna. The latter of these Armenians has posts of the greatest trust near the Nabob's person ; and through the means of these men, the Armenians in general are setting up an independant footing in the country, are carrying on a trade greatly detrimental to our investments in all parts, and commit daily acts of violence ; which reflect no small odium on the English, who are supposed to encourage their proceedings.

37. It is this system of administration which we have constantly opposed, as thinking your affairs could not possibly prosper under it. And you will now be able to account for many differences at the Board, which will appear through the course of our consultations, and which will doubtless surprize you till the real cause is known. As we have hitherto denied our assents to measures because we deemed them contrary to your interests, though the adopting them would have turned out greatly to our private emoluments ; so you may rest assured it shall ever continue an invariable maxim with us, to make your honour and advantage the sole object of our attention.

38. You have been acquainted, Honourable Sirs, that the King has applied for your assistance, to settle him on the throne ; and to recover such parts of his territories as are still in the hands of rebels

It is our opinion, that we have troops enough to form an army for the enterprize; and as we have no European enemy to fear, the forces requisite for this service can without danger be spared. The Nabob's large army, which is now a burthen upon the provinces, and only kept up to screen him from the King's Power, and through his jealousy of us, would afford a considerable addition, and at the same time ease the country of an immense expence. Shujah Dowlat, one of the most powerful men of the empire, would join with his forces; besides many other considerable powers, friends to the King, from different parts, would flock to the royal standard, should we ever take the field; and our army most probably (as the King himself has frequently declared) would march to the gates of Delhy without opposition. We most humbly submit to you, whether so glorious an opportunity of aggrandizing the Company in Indostan should not be embraced; and leave it to yourselves to judge the reputation and advantages which would result to them, if through the means of the British arms, his Majesty should be established on his throne. For want of our aid, he is now actually at a stand, and unable to prosecute his journey to his capital.

But should you be unwilling to extend your connections further up the country, and instead of accepting the Dewanny of Bengal, choose to confine your views to your new acquisitions, and to the trade of Bengal alone, we beg leave to offer it as our opinion, that we ought to maintain an interest in the country, independent of the Nabob, by supporting in power such men as have proved themselves our friends: This will serve as a balance against him, should he entertain evil designs against us.

40. We have now given you a fair relation of things, and, conscious of the goodness of our intentions, we cannot but flatter ourselves,

selves, we shall meet with your approbation in the part we have taken. We shall therefore conclude with the assurance, that our endeavours shall never be wanting to promote the honour and interests of our Employers, their success being the object of our most fervent wishes.

We are, with the greatest respect,

Honoured Sirs,

Your most faithful

And dutiful Servants,

FORT WILLIAM,
11th March, 1762.

(Signed)

EYRE COOTE,
P. AMYATT.
JOHN CARNAC.
W. ELLIS.
S. BATSON.
H. VERBLST.